A LETTER

From his EXCELLENCY the

Heer Van Horne

To the High and Mighty Lords

THE

States Generall

Of the United PROVINCES,

From on Board the *Hollandia* Sailing off of *Nermontier*,

Wherein is given a true Accomt of the Actions of the Dutch Fleet upon the Coasts of *France*, as also of their Landing in divers places on the said Coasts.

Faithfully translated out of the Dutch Copy.

London, Printed for J. G. 1674.

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High and Mighty Lords,

SInce I had the Honour of writing to your High and Mightinesses upon our departure from *Torbay*, we have used all possible Endeavours to accomplish our Design; and coming about *Heyssant*, we sailed as near the *French* Coast as the Art of Navigation would permit. The Enemy upon our Coming near, raised the whole Country along the Coast, and made divers Shots at us at severall distances.

We understanding from the Prisoners that we had taken in divers Barks, that a great part of the Army of *Bretaign* appeared a-

Breſt and thereabout, which City they had very much fortified, and furniſhed it with many Cannon; and that they had alſo placed others upon the Ships that were there ranged to prevent any coming into the Haven; all the Commanders of the Fleet were of this Opinion, that (conſidering how the Wind did bear, as alſo the Dangers of that Coaſt) we ſhould doe no otherwiſe for the preſent, but ſhear off, and go with thoſe ſhips upon which divers Companies of the Land-Forces were embarqued, and lie between *Bell Iſle* and the *Cardinals*; till being all joyned together again, we ſhould ſail with our whole Force for the River *Loyr*.

The 23. of *June* we arrived before *Bell Iſle*, and took the ſame day about the Evening 2 Barks laden with Wine and Salt. The next day in the Morning we ſpake with a Skipper of an *Engliſh* Ship laden with Corn, that came out of the Haven from the Fort of *Bell Iſle*, who aſſured us that he ſaw 8000 men in Arms in the Iſland, among which were 600 Horſe, all Gentlemen, Inhabitants of the Continent. But this being not at all confirmed by a Pilot whom we had taken, and who was alſo upon *Bell Iſle* 3 daies before, and told us that the ſame was but a Report, without any Certainty of Truth in it; hereupon we reſolved to land upon this Iſland, and I went with the Heer Admirall *Tromp* to take a View thereof, and found a very convenient place for Landing.

In the mean time I ſent a Trumpeter to the Inhabitants, with an Order that they ſhould depute ſome to come on Board us, to underſtand our Intentions, upon pain of being plundered. The Trumpeter being brought to the Governour of the Fort, he having read the Order, returned the ſame preſently again into his hand, and ſaid, that the Inhabitants ſhould not ſubmit to that Order; and if ſo be we would attack the Iſland, that they ſhould very well be able to defend the ſame.

Hereupon we landed very happily the next day in the Morning, finding much leſs Reſidence then we expected, notwithſtanding the Enemy had made 2 Retrenchments there, one above another, that were thick ſet with men. The climbing up the Hill was found to be very tedious. So far as I can judge, and as I verily believe, there were not in all above 3000 men upon the Iſland that were in Arms; that *Engliſh*-man was much miſtaken.

This Evening, after we had traverſed one part of the Iſland, we encamped

camped in a Valley, about a Musket-Shot from the Caſtle, where we found water to drink, a convenience very much wanting in that Iſland.

The 28th. of *June* we encamped at *Soiſon*, where we brought together the moſt part of the Cattel that were upon that Iſland, whereof there was great ſtore, and put them on board the Fleet.

After we had layn there 2 days, getting a ſight of our foremoſt Ships, we reſolved to embark again, without making any Attempt upon the Fort; for it would have taken up too much time, which we might otherwiſe employ more profitably and advantageouſly in the Service of your High and Mightineſſes. We took alſo 3 Pieces of Canon with us, which we had taken from the Enemy. We ſteered our Courſe to the River of *Nantes*, and came upon the 3d. of *July* in the Morning into the Bay of *Bourg-neuf*, and anchored over againſt *Nermoutier*.

The Tide being ſpent that day before we could land, we reſolved the next day to make up to the Iſland of *Nermontier*, which we did. The Enemy had there upon the Coaſt caſt up ſome Batteries and Trenches, in which they had poſted their Muskettiers: and becauſe there was not much water, ſo that we could not come to Land with our Sloops, Boats & Pinks, the moſt of our men marched up to the Middle through the water, ſo that divers of their Bandeliers were ſpoiled.

The Enemy made ſome Diſcharges upon us out of their Trenches, and from behind the Walls of a Dorp, under which in a ſhort ſpace after we landed. We were no ſooner come among them, but they betook themſelves to flight, and ſaved themſelves upon the Continent of *Poitou*; quitting alſo at the ſame time the Caſtle of *Nermontier*.

We took upon the ſame, as alſo upon the Batteries along the Coaſt, 17 Great Pieces, 8 of Braſs, and 9 of Iron, with 19 Ships that were on ground, and could not be carried away. In the Service we had 135 killed and wounded, with divers Officers; as namely, the Lieutenant-Colonel and Major of my Regiment, 1 Captain, 1 Captain-Lieutenant, and 2 Enſigns, who in all probability will be recovered.

The Priſoners that we took in the Rencounter told us, that there

were 5000 men upon the Continent ready to come for the Island, and that there were 500 already on their march towards it: which made me to haſten my March as much as might be, to encounter them upon the Paſſage, leaving Captain *Braekell* with 3 Companies of Seamen, and 70 Muskettiers, to defend the Caſtle; and Captain *Hardenbroeck*, with a Company of Seamen of Admiral *Tromp's*, in the Abby. Coming in the Evening near the Paſſage, we underſtood that they were all retired again to the Continent, where we alſo could diſcern a great Number of people, as well Foot as Horſe. The want of freſh water obliged me to encamp one hour's diſtance from thence, leaving the Heer *van Somerdijck* with 400 men for the Defence of that Poſt.

The 5th. of *July* in the Morning came thereabout 2 Brigandines built after the faſhion of Gallies, which thoſe of *Rochel* had ſent to diſcover our Fleet, each of them having on board 3 Pieces of Canon and 35 Seamen, all well armed. Theſe not knowing that we were landed, came near the Shoar, where the Heer *van Somerdijk* had laid 60 Muskettiers cloſe behind a Hillock; and while he amuſed them by leaving one *French*-man for them to ſee, the reſt came ſo ſuddenly up to them, that they ſurrendred themſelves.

It is conjectured this Iſland hath about 2000 Houſes in it; and it is divided for near 50 Rods from the main Continent, ſo that we could ſhoot with our Muskets eaſily to the Enemy that lay encamped before us on the other ſide of the Water, and they to us. At Low-water the Land that lies between *Bovin* and *Beauvoir*, which is the firm Land of *Poictou*, puts out ſo far, and this Iſland is ſo dry, that they could paſs over dry ſhod with as many men in Front as they pleaſed, from the one ſide to the other; which Paſſage is but an hour's going, and may be marched either 2 hours before, or 2 hours after Low-water.

The Enemy gave out a report, as if they had Orders from the King to come over with all their Forces, as well Foot as Horſe, to make us quit that Poſt: in the mean time they themſelves ſet all their Salt-pans on fire about *Bovin* and *Beauvoir*, by which we diſcovered, that they were more afraid of our coming over to them, then that they had any intention to attack us.

After we had lain there 3 weeks, your High and Mightineſſes Service forbidding my proceeding any farther there, we imbarked again,

having first blown up a part of the Castle, slighted their Works along the Coast, levelled their Houses, all their Cattel (which were a great Number) being consumed; and moreover having taken Hostages of them, till the money should be paid which was agreed upon for the saving their Houses from Burning, being the summe of 14000 Rix-dollers: which Agreement hath been since advanced by their Refractarineſs.

From our Prisoners we understand, that the Duke *de Chaulnes* is with a Reserve of 400 Horse of the Gentry between *Croisic* and *St. Lazare*, about 6 hours march from thence; and that the Duke *de Retz*, with about 1200 Gentlemen, and 5000 of the Inhabitants, was between *Bourg neuf* and *Mache*, one hour from thence. The Duke *de Vieuville*, with 2000 Gentlemen, all Horse, and 8000 Inhabitants, were spread over against us in our sight, at *Bovin* and *Beauvoir*. The 2 last may joyn at a short warning.

The Duke of *Guadagne* commands at *Rochel*, *Oleron*, and the Isle of *Rhé*; into which places they have put most of the Souldiery, supposing that our Design may lie there.

According to the report of divers Prisoners, which is also confirmed by the *English* and *Hamburgers* Ships coming from thence, there are in the Island of *Rhé* onely, 10000 men in Arms, and 1000 Horse: they have also drawn amongst them 5000 of the Inhabitants; and within this 6 weeks there are come to them the Foot-Regiments of *Guadagne*, *Neuf-ville*, *Louvigny*, and a Battalion of Marine Foot, with other particular Companies; as also the Horse-Regiments of *Courselle* and *Belleguard*: the first of which hath a Command under *Guadagne*; the second over the Horse; and *Lauvay* over the Fortifications.

From *Oleron* we have no farther particulars, but that they are full of Souldiers there, as well Foot as Horse; and that within this 3 weeks there is also arrived a Battalion of the Marine Companies.

The Governour of *St. Sebastian* hath written to me, that he had made a narrow Enquiry into the Forces of the Enemy along the Coasts, and found that they had in Arms above 80000 Foot and 6000 Horse, from *Rochel* to *Bourdeaux* and *Bayonne*. That the Marshals *de Gramont* and *Obret*, with the Counts *de la Sere* and *Louvigny*, had the Charge of the Coasts between *Bourdeaux* and *Bayonne*.

The Prisoners, and others that are come from thence, say that the Misery along the Coast is so great, that they are wholly ruined by the

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Cavalry and Taxes; yea in as bad a manner as if they had the Army of an Enemy among them; ſo that there is not any thing in the leaſt left remaining but the Houſes.

The Heer Admiral *Tromp* hath given your High and Mightineſſes Advice of the Burning of a *French* Fregat, which was chaſed on the Coaſt by 2 of our Men of War, with his taking of a good Prize; ſo that I will not here repeat the ſame. We ſhall be preſently again under ſail, to proſecute what farther Work is appointed us.

In the Ship Hollandia, *ſailing off of* Nermontier.

Where alſo High and Mighty Lords, &c.

Signed W. A. *Count* van Horne.

FINIS.

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